

William Gulas. The Peace Garden, planned and cultivated by parishioners, serves as a living reminder that hope will rise from the ashes, and that Father Gulas' light continues to offer guidance, inspiration and hope throughout the St. Stanislaus community, today, and for all time.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT HILL FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 2004

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Robert Hill, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 249, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout. Robert achieved the rank of Eagle Scout on April 7, 2004 and will be recognized at an Eagle Scout Court of Honor this November.

Robert has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Robert has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but the respect of his family, peers, and community.

For his Eagle Scout Project, Robert organized a the clean up and repair of a facility used by law enforcement officers for training exercises at Weston Bend State Park.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Robert Hill for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

A PROCLAMATION IN MEMORY OF LINDSAY CUTSHALL AND JASON ALLEN

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 2004

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, I hereby offer my heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of Lindsay Cutshall of Fresno, Ohio and Jason Allen of Zeeland, Michigan; and

Whereas, Lindsay Cutshall and Jason Allen were both caring and loving individuals who were both active in the Rock-N-River Christian Camp, and

Whereas, Lindsay Cutshall and Jason Allen will certainly be remembered by all those who knew them; and

Whereas, through those lives that they touched, the memories of Lindsay Cutshall and Jason Allen will stand as monuments to two truly fine people.

Therefore, while I understand how words cannot express our grief at this most trying of times, I offer this token of profound sympathy to the families and friends of Lindsay Cutshall and Jason Allen.

HONORING THE LIFE OF 1ST LT. MATTHEW LYNCH, USMC

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 2004

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, there are times in our lives when we fully realize the presence of heroes among us. And there are times when we fully realize that we have lost one of those heroes; that is the case with Marine 1st Lt. Matthew Lynch, a young man who gave his life for his country in Iraq. It is difficult to memorialize a man who stood as tall in life as Matthew did and harder yet to memorialize a man who stands even taller in death. I believe the words of his father, Bill Lynch, spoken at Matt's funeral speak best to this fallen hero and not only capture the magnitude of the great life Matt lived but the magnitude of the loss to our nation:

"To all Matt's friends, and you are many; I thank you for coming. Saying farewell to our beloved Matthew is the hardest thing I have ever done. At this time, my thoughts alternately fly through my mind like sharp arrows; or slip through my mental fingers like quicksilver; and I cannot hold them fast. Because of this; and because I have only this one time to pay tribute to Matt, and to tell you about his life, I must affix my thoughts to paper, and read them; and for this, I beg your indulgence.

But for now, I borrow from Shakespeare, and tell you that . . . We gather today to praise Matt, not to bury him. And that is because all the things Matt was; Love of family and friends; gentleness, strength, humor, grace, dedication, honor, loyalty, patriotism, humility, and yes, of course, courage . . . can never be buried, because they are eternal, as is now, our beloved Matt.

While we mourn Matt's loss it brings with it an opportunity for us all, in private moments, to reflect on what he was, and perhaps to develop in ourselves, those attributes he had, which we lack; so that the warm light of remembrance which fills this church today, may one day shine on us.

I will speak to you today of Matt's life, and of ironies gentle, and tragic, which at present you know nothing of, and I will tell you of a curious sign I've lately seen which reassures me.

But for now, to understand Matt's life, you are in the right place; because this is where all that he was, began, on a Summer day in 1979, when my wife Angela and I brought our little Matthew Devin Lynch to that very baptismal font, to be baptized. The Gospel that day, I remember vividly, was the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, and I thought that a very propitious beginning. The name Matthew, we knew, came from Hebrew, and meant "Gift of God."

And what a gift he was! Cherubic, loving, obedient, and oh yes, very active. As he developed, it was evident that he had extraordinary athletic skills. One day when he was about 3 years old, and bounding about with his brother Tim and their friends, a visitor to our neighbor's patio said to me "Is that your son?" "Yes," I replied. "Do you realize that he is a natural athlete?" the man said. "How do you know," I asked? "I am a pediatrician," he said, "I see thousands of kids, and believe me, he is a natural athlete." It was a prophecy, which would be fulfilled.

I raised both our sons as athletes, and spent countless hours drilling various skills into them. I always did it with some zany game I had devised . . . Kids learn best when

they are having fun. In most of those games, I was the villain, the opponent, the one to be conquered, but I always did it with humor, and they came to love "the games."

When they were only 5 or 6 years old, we used to play a game I had devised to build their swimming speed, I called it "Shark and Minnows." In our community pool, I would emplace Matt and Tim near a ladder at one end of the pool. Their mission was to swim to a ladder directly opposite them, and get out of the pool before the shark could catch them. I stood waist deep in the water, at the far end . . . the feared and fearsome Shark.

At first I was a very successful shark, but very shortly, the minnows got much quicker, and the shark caught nothing but air. Soon the Minnows "can't catch me" glee, told me that my days as a big fish were over, and that Matt's were just beginning. A few years later, as Matt swam by me, I raised my head, to see if someone was pulling him on a rope.

At that time, Tim, had his eyes on two Jericho High School swim records, and he decided to join the Long Island Aquatic Club, to begin his assault on those records, which he did in fact, later claim. But in the beginning Matt just tagged along. After their first three hour LIAC workout, I asked Matt "How did it go?" "I . . . NEVER . . . want . . . to . . . do that . . . again," said Matt. But like everything Matt did, he went back, and excelled . . . a theme you will come to recognize.

Soon, he became one of the elite LIAC swimmers. He also swam right across his high school's record board, eclipsing every individual record, even Tim's, leaving his own name in his wake. He set the country record in the 200-yard individual medley, finished third in New York State in that event and the 100-yard freestyle. He was All County swimmer three years in a row; a County champion in two events each of his last two years.

Baseball was the same. All-County catcher his last two years in high school, nominated for the "Diamond Award," as one of the best players in Nassau County; and as a senior, he tied for the home run record, all of this easily fulfilling the prophecy that stranger had made so many years ago.

He continued this at Duke University. He was the swim team's "Rookie of the Year," and became a mainstay of that team. He was also a catcher on the Duke baseball team for two years, but in his Senior year, carrying out the theme which defines his life, he told his swim coach he wanted to return to his swim team "family," his buddies, and he did. As a Senior, and in his very last race, when his team needed him to step up, we saw him swim one of his best 100-yard freestyle times, then sadly walk off, his career over. Between high school and college, he loved his job as a Jones Beach lifeguard; competed on their competition team, and there too, he excelled, and developed many friends.

"What next?" I asked him shortly after he graduated from Duke. "Dad, the Marine Corps, or course." "Are you doing this because Tim and I did it, or because YOU want to do it?" I asked. "Dad, I want to do it," he replied.

The next few years were difficult for Angela and I. Our Marine sons began to go in harm's way. First, Tim in Afghanistan; then Tim and Matt in Iraq. But they always returned. Last Easter, Matt phoned us to say he was ordered to Iraq a 2nd time, as a replacement for some Lieutenants in another unit who had been wounded. But after 3 months, he again returned, and we were overjoyed. But shortly, he said, "Mom, Dad, you will think I'm crazy, but my old unit, my buddies are going back to Iraq, and I really want to join them." Again, that theme of loyalty, family.